

Civil Society Urges Citizens to Monitor Budget Implementation



(L-R) CSBAG Executive Director, Julius Mukunda, Minister of State for Finance in charge of General Duties, Hon. Gabriel Gadison Ajedra, and the Acting Permanent Secretary to the Treasury at the Finance Ministry, Kenneth Mugambe, pose for a photo after launching the National Budget month for FY 2019/20 this afternoon. | @CSBAG 2019

“...this National Budget presents us an opportunity to showcase our contribution in promoting budget accountability in Uganda.”

Civil Society Organizations under their umbrella, Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG) have called upon citizens to get involved in the National Budget process and monitor Budget implementation.

Speaking at a press briefing to launch the FY 2019/20 National Budget month organized by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) in partnership with CSBAG at the Finance Ministry this afternoon, CSBAG’s Executive Director, Mr. Julius Mukunda implored Ugandans to also take part in the planned events

that make up the 2019 National Budget month and listen to the Budget speech on 13th June.

“This Budget month presents us an opportunity to showcase our contribution in promoting Budget accountability in Uganda,” said Mukunda.

Highlights for the Budget Strategy FY 2019/20

While presenting the Finance Minister’s remarks during the press briefing, Minister of State for Finance in charge of General Duties, Hon. Gabriel Gadison Ajedra, said that for FY 2019/20, Uganda’s growth strategy focuses on interventions aimed at increasing GDP growth rate and ensuring that it is inclusive.

“Interventions aimed at will include enhancing agriculture production, productivity and agro processing, investment in physical and social infrastructure, industrialization, lowering the cost of credit, increasing opportunities for youth employment and socio economic inclusion, enhancing environmental protection, as well as improving governance and security,” Hon. Ajedra said.

Acting Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, who is also Director Budget at the Finance Ministry, Kenneth Mugambe assured Ugandans that the National Budget continues to meet its objectives and remains on track for NDP II targets.

“Based on the robust performance in the first half of FY 2018/19, the economy is expected to grow faster than earlier projected and as a result GDP growth rate for FY 2018/19 has been revised to 6.3% from 6.0%,” said Hon. Ajedra. He also added that this implies that the size of the economy will increase to UGX110,024bn in FY 2018/19 up from UGX100,531bn in FY 2017/18 in nominal terms.

MPs’ Allowance Increment

In FY 2019/20, key sectors will face budget cuts. However, Members of Parliament (MPs) plan on increasing their allowances by 39% at a cost of UGX63.46bn by the time the budget is read.

Hon. Ajedra noted that while Parliament determines its emoluments, salaries, and allowances, this money should be spent elsewhere. He also called for an amendment of this law such that salary commissions are put in place.

Mr. Mukunda also added that increasing MPs’ allowances will demoralize other civil servants like teachers, doctors and soldiers.

“On average, per capital increase to the MPs allowances is UGX 149 million annually and this is more that the annual allocation for the unconditional wage grants of Luuka (UGX 77.9mn), Oyam (UGX 84.6mn) and Budaka (UGX 144mn).” Said Mr. Mukunda. He also said that there is need to reverse Parliament’s power to determine MPs’ allowances and salaries.

The National Budget month for FY 2019/20 is aimed at increasing support for Government programs, improving accountability, and service delivery. Government will undertake activities such as tree planting, donation of scholastic materials, the Budget Speech reading, the Post Budget Speech, and regional Budget breakfast meetings among others.

Mr. Mukunda reminded citizens of their right to know and get involved in the affairs of Government as enshrined in the 1st Political objective in the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and Article 38 of the same.

Mr. Mugambe appreciated the role of civil society and the media in monitoring service delivery and tasked them to continue following up on government projects.